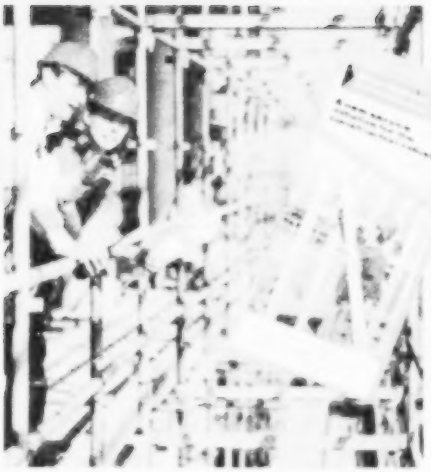
Access
News on WCB products, programs, and services
June 2004

WCB offers help for small construction firms

At the WCB, we know that the majority of businesses in the province are small businesses — with fewer than 20 employees — and that small businesses have unique service needs. Resources are often stretched to the limit and employers simply don't have specialized staff to deal exclusively with WCB matters when they arise. We also know that, in B.C., there are more small businesses in the construction industry than in any other sector.

To assist these employers and give them a single point of contact, we've opened a **Small Business Contact Centre for Construction**, a resource and education centre staffed by WCB specialists with construction industry knowledge.

If you operate a small construction business, you can call the centre to report injuries or get help with everything from managing claims to establishing return-to-work programs, filling out WCB forms, and building safer workplaces. Staff will also answer general questions about the WCB and, when a more in-depth response is required, they'll connect you with the appropriate person.



Established as a pilot project, the contact centre is an initiative undertaken in cooperation with the Construction Safety Association of B.C. It helps us be more responsive to the needs of small construction businesses. To ensure our responsiveness, staff in the contact centre promise to:

- Answer each call personally
- Respond to voice mail messages within 24 hours
- Acknowledge e-mail inquiries within three business days
- Respond to written correspondence within 15 business days

To reach the Small Business Contact Centre for Construction, call **604 233-5353**, or toll-free at **1 866 338-3888**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can also fax **604 233-5360**, toll-free at **1 866 616-2558**, or e-mail **smallbiz@wcb.bc.ca**.

Now it's easier than ever to do business in B.C.

Registering a business, applying for a business licence, and recording a change of address are now a whole lot easier thanks to B.C.'s online **OneStop Business Services**. Launched in March, this newly improved Internet service allows you to complete multiple business applications for different public agencies quickly and easily from one convenient location.

Whether you're starting, changing, or expanding your business, simply log on to OneStop to:

- Register with the WCB of B.C.
- Get a Business Number
- Register your sole proprietorship or general partnership with the B.C. Corporate Registry
- Register with the Canada Revenue Agency for GST/HST, payroll deductions, corporate income tax, and import/export accounts
- Register for provincial sales tax (PST) with the Ministry of Provincial Revenue
- Register for hotel room tax (HRT) with the Ministry of Provincial Revenue
- Apply for one or more municipal business licences with participating municipalities
- Change your business address with many agencies at the same time

Since you can complete several applications in one session, you save time — time you can spend doing the things that are important to you, like taking care of your business and your customers.

OneStop Business Services is the product of a partnership between the B.C. Ministry of Finance, B.C. Ministry of Provincial Revenue, Canada Revenue Agency, Industry Canada, a number of B.C. municipalities, and the WCB of B.C. The partners aim to streamline the process of doing business in B.C. Stringent security measures protect the privacy and confidentiality of your business information.

To find out more, visit **www.onestopbc.ca** or one of the 100+ OneStop kiosks located throughout B.C.

Protect yourself!

Did you know that before you hire a subcontractor you should always get a WCB clearance letter? It will tell you whether the firm you re considering is registered with the WCB and up to date on its premium payments. Why does that matter? Because, if the firm isn t registered, you could be liable for WCB insurance premiums owing in connection with the work or service being performed.

The same is true when you hire someone to work in or around your home. Always check whether these firms or individuals carry their own WCB coverage. If they do, ask for their WCB account numbers. Double-check their information by getting a clearance letter before they begin working for you and again before you make your final payment.

It s fast and easy to generate clearance letters. You can do it online, day or night, by visiting **WorkSafebc.com**.

You should also know that, if you hire someone to work in or around your home (a nanny or renovation contractor, for instance), you may be required to register as a residential employer — even if you already have a WCB account number for your regular business.

If you re unsure about your requirements, visit the Employer & Small Business Centre at **WorkSafebc.com** or call **604 244-6181**, toll-free at **1 888 922-2768**.

Download hazard alerts

In the past decade, the WCB has produced hundreds of hazard alert bulletins to help workers and employers understand some of the more significant hazards they face on the job. These bulletins provide important safety messages for you and your workers. Many describe workplace accidents that resulted in serious or fatal injuries; all list safe work practices that workers should adopt to avoid accident or injury.

To help you find the hazard alerts relevant to you and your organization, the WCB has created a database that lets you search the documents by industry, topic, year, equipment, or accident type. To access the database, visit the WCB online at **http://publications.healthandsafetycentre.org/s/hazardalerts.asp**.

Access WCB facts and figures

Want to know the most commonly reported workplace injury in B.C.? How about the number of penalties imposed in any given year or which industry sector files the most claims? For answers to these and many other questions, check out the WCB's new online **Facts and Figures Centre**. It provides a wealth of information including:

- WCB-related statistics
- Industry health and safety trends
- Historical information about the workers compensation system
- WCB performance targets and results

It also offers Workplace Traumatic Injury Reports, an interactive web reporting feature that allows you to generate statistical reports specific to your industry. You can view claims by date, sector and subsector, injury type, occupation, gender, source of injury, and much more.

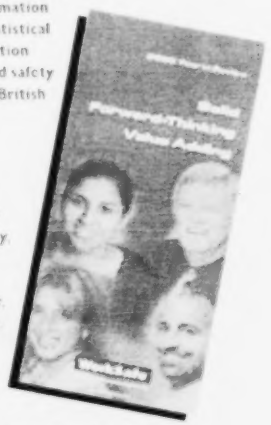
To access the Facts and Figures Centre, visit **www.worksafebc.com/facts_and_figures/default.asp**.

WCB annual report available online

The WCB has released its *2003 Annual Report and 2004 — 2006 Service Plan*. Highlights include:

- The injury rate — the primary measure of health and safety in B.C. workplaces — reached an all-time low of 3.0 short-term injuries per 100 person-years of employment, down 42 percent since 1994.
- The WCB ended 2003 with a 100 percent funded status — exceeding our goal of 95 percent.
- Employer base rates were relatively stable in 2003, in contrast to many other jurisdictions in Canada.
- The WCB undertook major operational changes to improve service to stakeholders, including implementing a new, more streamlined appeal structure.

The WCB has also released a summary of the report, *2003 Year in Review*, which provides an overview of the organization s key statistics, performance targets and results, operational highlights, and financial information for the year. In addition, a statistical supplement provides information about occupational health and safety issues and industry trends in British Columbia.



How to order

All these publications are available online at **WorkSafebc.com**. To order a copy of the executive summary, *2003 Year in Review*, call Adrienne Maxwell at **604 279-7572**, **local 3512** or e-mail **amaxwell@wcb.bc.ca**.

WorkSafe
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF BC

Access

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